

CLAIMS:

1. A method for relieving joint pain or other discomforts associated with joint disorders in a warm-blooded vertebrate comprising the step of delivering to said vertebrate by oral ingestion a nutritional supplement consisting
5 essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is from about 0.1 μg to about 400 $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$ of body weight
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of adding the hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, to the carrier, and wherein the carrier
10 comprises food or water.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the nutritional supplement is provided in capsule form.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the warm-blooded vertebrate is a human, or an equine, canine, or feline species.
- 15 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an arthritic condition.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the arthritic condition is selected from the group consisting of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an
20 inflammatory condition involving skeletal or musculoskeletal structures.
8. A nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, the nutritional supplement provided in an orally ingestible dosage form.
9. The nutritional supplement of claim 8 wherein the effective
25 amount of hyaluronic acid is 1 to 6 mg.
10. The nutritional supplement of claim 8 wherein the orally ingestible dosage form is a capsule or gel seal.